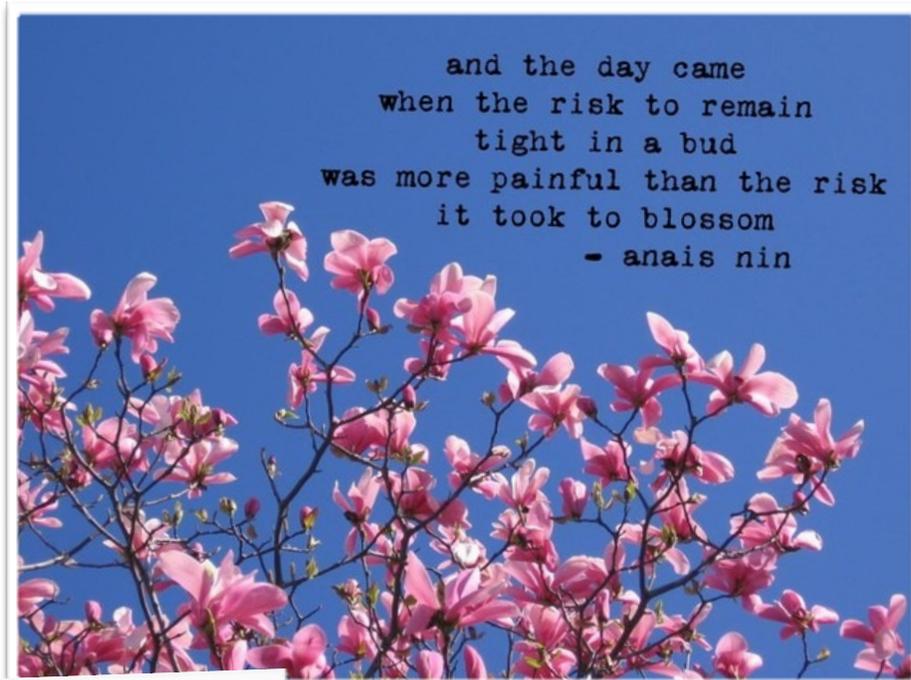


Seasonal Sadhana: Spring



Elements Of Spring

Springtime is governed by the elements of Earth & Water, and imbalance occurs when these elements are in excess. Imbalance can occur simply because the elements are high in our natural environment, but can also be aggravated by our diets and lifestyles. Excess Earth & Water elements can leave us feeling heavy, sluggish, congested, lethargic, and depressed. Balance can be achieved by invoking the missing elements of Fire, Wind & Space through practice and lifestyle choices.

Bhairavi: The Fire of Tapas & The Radiance of Tejas

Bhairavi is a Kundalini goddess from the Tantric traditions and as such she is associated with the fiery processes of transformation. She represents the purifying fire of tapas (intentional practice), and the radiant light of cellular intelligence (tejas). The following practices can help you to strengthen her energy current in your life during this season.

Fire Bijas: Om Hum Ram (Om Hoom Raam) , Svaha (Swaha)

Meditation on the Inner Fire: use the bija mantras to help focus your mind in meditation, and visualize a sacred fire lit in the space of your own heart. Make an offering of your distraction, fatigue, old ways of seeing and doing, into the fire of your meditation. Practice daily until you feel clarity of focus and intention.

The Word: get clear on your primary intentions for this season. What is it that wants to come into manifestation? What is it that needs to be left behind? What qualities of heart need to be strengthened? What needs to be purified? The more clarity you can get here, the more potent your actions will be in this season.

Turn up The Heat: this is the season to light up your physical practices and burn away any heaviness that can occur as we leave winter and move into early spring. On your yoga mat practice more heating poses and spend more time working at your evolving edge.

Spice It Up: to cut through the congestion that can occur in this season add more warming spices to your food such as ginger, cayenne, cinnamon, clove, black pepper, and cardamom. Though we are leaving winter behind be careful not to eat too many raw or cold foods as of yet as they can weaken digestion in this season and lead to further congestion.

Cleanse: cleansing can be a great practice to strengthen the fire element in both your mind and body this time of year. Simply cutting out wheat, dairy, and sugar is a good start, and eating a simple clean diet for a few weeks. As well try to create more discipline around media intake. More meditation, less Facebook= more focus, less confusion.

Hanuman: The Embodiment of Prana

Hanuman is the son of the wind (Vayu), and is the divine embodiment of Prana, the most refined aspect of Wind & Space elements. His energy current is one of inspiration, enthusiasm, and a strength that is grounded in humility. He reminds us to act in the world in bold and courageous ways, but always in service of the Highest. The following practices can help you invoke his energy in your own life so that you can move through the spring season in a way that is uplifted and inspired.

Prana Bijas: Om Aim Yam Hamsa (Om Aym Yaam Haamsa) chant these mantras out loud, using the active sound of the Japa to awaken your mind and reduce any dullness.

Enlivening Pranayama: add active pranayama to your daily sadhana, including Breath of Joy, Kapphalbati, & Bastrika. If you become anxious or ungrounded during practice then add in Brahmari, the bees breath to reduce agitation.

Get Inspired: the fire work of this season should help you choose what to focus your attention on, and from there give yourself fully to any creative projects or new ideas that are ready to come into being. Listen for what wants to be expressed, and then act on it.

Make Space: in your asana practice bring in more poses that make space in the body and in particular open up the chest and belly, areas where the heaviness of Earth & Water can gather in this season. Backbending, side stretches, heart openers, and expansive postures will all increase the inner space in your body and allow for a greater movement of Pranic energy.

Get Outside: One of the primary ways we can receive more Prana is by getting outside, breathing fresh air, and being in nature. Take a hike, go to the beach, walk in the rain. Increase the amount of time you spend outdoors in this season and tap into the rising energy of nature at this time of year, let it awaken your body and your mind.

Bitter is Better: The bitter and astringent tastes help to reduce congestion in the body at this time of year so try to bring more of them into your diet. Look for all the fresh seasonal greens such as dandelion, asparagus, and endive. Cook with fresh turmeric and see if you can find burdock at your local grocers.

Devote Yourself to Something Bigger: Winter is naturally a very introspective and internally focused season, but as we shift into spring we are called to start bringing our energy back to the surface. Contemplate what you might put some of your energy into that has a positive effect on others around you or is in service of a greater good. Widen your circle of influence and engage your outer world with renewed enthusiasm and the spirit of offering.